



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
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## **Statewide Science Assessment Results Released**

**MONTPELIER** – Statewide science assessment results for Spring 2010 were released by the Vermont Department of Education today. The results are from the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) Science assessments, given to Vermont public school students in grades 4, 8 and 11 in May 2010. This is the third year of administration of the NECAP Science Assessment.

Fifty-four percent of Vermont fourth graders assessed were proficient or higher in science, up two percentage points from last year. In grade eight, 29 percent were proficient or higher, up five points. In grade 11, 28 percent were proficient or higher, up 1 point from 2009.

“While our scores continue to increase slightly each year, we obviously have a long way to go regarding how well our students acquire science skills and knowledge,” said Commissioner Armando Vilaseca. “The department will continue its efforts to identify instructional methods and strategies used by schools with the highest scores on the NECAP science assessment so all Vermont schools and students can benefit from what those schools have learned.”

“Students continue to show the greatest difficulty with the inquiry portion of the test, which requires them to analyze, draw conclusions and make predictions from data they collect during a hands-on investigation that is part of the assessment,” said Assessment Director Michael Hock.

As seen in previous years statewide and nationally, an achievement gap persists between students from low-income families and their peers. In grade four, 37 percent of those students were proficient or higher, compared to 64 percent of their peers. In grade eight, 15 percent of those students were proficient or higher, compared to 37 percent of their peers. In grade 11, 13 percent of those students were proficient or higher, compared to 33 percent of their peers.

The NECAP assessments were created in collaboration with Rhode Island and New Hampshire and is now also administered in Maine. These assessments are designed to specifically assess how well Vermont students have learned the skills and content contained in the *Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities* and *Grade Expectations*.

For school reports, visit

[http://www.education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm\\_assessment/data.html#necap](http://www.education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_assessment/data.html#necap).